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Building up a Structured Complex of Aims.

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Brief remarks about the nature of language study introduce this compendium of aims for different students and levels of instruction. The account considers language form, type, style, and use in the student's society, (2) educational requirements, (3) the student in specialized or general education, and (4) the instructional planner's effect on the student and his motivation. The formulation of realistic aims through the (1) understanding and improvement of various restrictions, (2) use of partial aims, (3) cooperation with other subject fields, (4) program articulation, and (5) understanding of multiple values is also discussed. For companion documents see FL001 223 and FL 001 224. (AF)

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B u i l d i n g u p a S t r u c t u r e d
C o m p l e x o f A i m s

Methods of Foreign language teaching (FLT) cannot be responsibly selected, coordinated, further elaborated and applied, unless the teacher is conscious of the aims of the teaching process. This includes awareness of both the aims of a certain stage of instruction as a whole and of the pupils' single attainable achievements, i.e. abilities of varying complexity which are to be acquired in the course of the schooling. Our periodicals and manuals devoted to language teachers' work present a wealth of experience on how to teach a foreign language, but they say little about why the teacher should teach in this or that particular way or they say it in passing and ad hoc, at best when introducing the vague term of effectiveness while leaving the implied notion of effect more or less undefined.

In all foreign language teaching we have to do with a complex of aims, which are different owing to the very fact that they occupy different positions in a certain structure or that they belong to structures which are themselves totally different. We will try not to limit our discussion to a certain age group of learners, but

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will prefer to consider the aims with reference to the various layers of the educational system, including pre-school or governess-and-tutor education at one end, and, at the other, self-taught study of languages by adults as a hobby or a requirement developed in the course of a person's career.

Ours shall be the view of one aware of the facts of the matter taught, i.e. language, and of the facts or factors concerning the learner, the teacher, their common life in a society, the organizers of the teaching (the community) etc.

Although the pupil himself, especially as a mere subject of the teaching process, cannot be left out of our considerations, I am not going to concentrate on questions of the learner's aptitude and other intrinsic data on the part of the learner. Eminent specialists in psychology and pedagogics will complement and perhaps also correct a linguist's personal views. Whatever psychology and pedagogics have to say on our problem is no doubt of immense importance for the selection, combination and application of teaching methods and also bears in a not inconsiderable degree upon the problem of teaching aims.

First, I think we could accept as an axiom that the aims of whatever stage of teaching we have in view is reflected in the learner's ability to show a certain final complex achievement or individual achievements. Testing procedures may be devised in order to detect how

near the target achievement the learner has got at the chosen final term of a stage.

FLT and Other School Subjects

As a springboard of our reflections there is the fact which has to be borne in mind that foreign language teaching at school represents a subject hardly parallel to any other school subject. Although verbal, in a sense, it is not based on knowledge of facts presentables verbally (or, vicariously, symbolically) as in science subjects, mathematics, history, geography, etc. With its core in abilities of performance, it is nearer to art subjects or even to physical training (leaving apart certain partial abilities in some other subjects, such as practical reckoning in mathematics). Even the subject traditionally called the mother tongue is based on knowledge of facts about a tool of communication already effectively wielded by the learner and on what is but an improvement and extension of its use prevalently on the basis of such knowledge. Unlike all other school subjects, foreign language has its teaching matter, normally at least, divorced from the learner's surroundings. When learning how to paint or how to perform music the learner has visual, man-created representations and aesthetic tone compositions round him, having had them round him from his early childhood. This is not the case of the foreign (or second) language.

FLT Specificity

It is true that there are cases where another language of a country of linguistically mixed population, or the language functioning on certain occasions or in certain strata of the society, is the "foreign language". These are rather special cases, leading to learning by social contact, so that teaching gets converted to mere facilitation of such contact or to prolonging it into the classroom. Whenever the pupil gets into regular contact with the other language in his family and outside his home and his school in his everyday activities, we have to do with learning without teaching. If the contact is irregular and does not take place at an everyday level, the situation merely provides motivation, and teaching the language is the only way to impart its use.

Much of what is published on language teaching in England, the United States or France refers to English and French as media of education and cultural and other progress in developing countries. However important and extensive, this kind of foreign language teaching has aims widely different from those established by European tradition where teaching living foreign languages relieved teaching Latin. In the developing countries, on the other hand, much of the function of Latin up to the age of Newton (or, somewhere, up to near the industrial revolution) has been taken over by English or French. Our interest lies with the teaching of foreign

languages as second or third languages in the strict sense that they do not occupy in that particular community a position which is not one of a vehicle of all social progress in that community and hence part of the life of that community, but which is a foreign language to all intents and purposes. We are concerned with teaching languages whose knowledge represents an additional accomplishment in a person's education, not a vehicle of that education. This we think is a useful distinction. Useful also in that sense that it helps understand the nature of attitudes of those who believe in the values of the simulation of bilingual situations in teaching and those who affirm that situations of one in process of becoming a bilingual cannot be either reproduced or imitated.

Socially Valuable but Socially Extrinsic Matter

The unique situation of foreign language as a school subject makes it impossible to use observation as the starting point of instruction in the same sense as observation is made use of in other types of teaching: observation of out-of-class phenomena practically accessible to the learner either directly or as transplanted to class or reproduced - in simplified form - in class. In case of a foreign language the teacher has to be accepted by the pupil as a bilingual who is able communicatively to master all sorts of private situations in other-lingual communities in the same way as he masters parallel situations inside his own, native community.

Leaving apart the question whether the pupils are right in supposing this and how far this is at all practicable, we can readily recognise that what the pupil can observe is a kind of test-tube reality reinforced by the belief that what is and can be shown in the test-tube is really a specimen of some otherwise inaccessible reality of a functional content which is accessible to the pupil on the basis of his conviction that it is parallel to his own language, being a kind of encipherment of the same thing as is nearly omnipresent in the social environment of all the pupil's waking hours. The test-tube reality is of a special sort, however, for the pupil cannot see or socially experience the communicative process carried on in the foreign language, but can merely follow the teacher's alleged ability. His inability to produce what seems phonetically more or less to correspond to the foreign speech sometimes overheard by the pupil and to what is in graphic form present in school books and perhaps other texts in general intended for reading (prospectuses, imported newspapers, etc.). But there is a hitch. Let us take it for granted that in language learning the pupil approaches observable phenomena as mere encipherments, that is other representations, of communicative units known to him. Then, however, there remains the fact that what is grasped as enciphered, though directly observable as parallel to communications in the pupil's native tongue, is actually least observed in the technical sense of

conscious observation. Like breathing and walking and their respective mechanisms, communication in one's native speech is so natural as to draw away altogether from the realm of objective phenomena and become nothing more than natural media of all sorts of existence. Hence the foreign language is socially valuable matter (and, in dependence on the pupil's motivation considered by him to be such), but it is at the same time socially extrinsic matter. It is, normally absent from the learner's and mostly also the teacher's life. On this consideration the selection of aims in foreign language teaching is to be based.

The aims have to be selected so as to remain within the pupil's social, which implies also cultural, reality. Why should our learner do multiplication or addition in a foreign language in the same automatized way as he does in his mother tongue? (Perhaps not even a waiter in an international hotel.) Nor should he be expected to say prayers in the foreign language. This does not mean that foreign reality should not be made familiar to him simply because it is not native or has no native counterparts. But it is additional knowledge, of cultural and generally humanizing value, providing additional motivation to learning, but it is not the ability to use the respective foreign language. And it is this ability what ought to be our first consideration.

Introducing FLT into the Curriculum.

The aims of foreign language teaching are frequently formulated as introduction to a foreign culture, especially its verbal forms, as facilitation of international human contact, or as combined mental and emotional training and education. These, however, are rather aims pursued by the very introduction of the subject into the curriculum and the emphasis on and approach to some aspects of the subject (or, outside school, another set of the learner's duties). Textual matter employed in teaching may of course further similar aims and so can some activities of the teacher introduced into the teaching itself and having perhaps nothing or but little to do with the teaching of the language itself. The matter taught is language and, as we have attempted to show, normally a matter socially extrinsic to the private and public lives of both pupil and teacher. Hence the aims of actual teaching have to be formulated linguistically above all. Physical training has likewise aims referable to bodily conditions and physical performance, though it may be, as school subject, introduced into the curriculum for a variety of special, political and perhaps even economic reasons. When dealing with aims of foreign language teaching we leave the other aims to be stated by experts on general pedagogics with reference to the general conception of an educational system.

The Form and the Type of Language to be taught

The first question has to be: What should be imparted to the learner? It has to be decided whether the pupil should be taught the spoken form of a language or rather the written form (with the understanding that in the teaching either, both the oral and the written, methodological approach is to be used). This is a question of particular importance in languages with basic structural differences between the two forms in grammar and the lexicon. It is well-known that specialists sent out to Arabic-speaking countries and taught at home written literary Arabic have to be practically re-educated on the spot for contact with the unskilled or lower-skilled labour. The problem, however, may sometimes be subtler: Should we teach the lexicon and the construction of belles lettres or of the daily paper? Or, should we teach form opprobrious to some strata or to all strata in some situations? Similar problems are partly answered with respect to the narrow or wide conception of the course, partly under the influence of the belief that a person already wielding a number of forms of his or her mother tongue (with perhaps certain variations in extent and thoroughness) should also be required to master a parallel complex of social forms of a language. Education in non-specialized schools usually goes the second way. We have a pupil who is fluent in the forms of familiar intercourse who has mastered the forms to be used in contact with unknown people or new acquaintances and who also

without perhaps being aware of it can avoid some forms and means of either when talking to superiors and of course whose reading knowledge of communications in his native tongue with functions widely distributed along the social scale is quite considerable. Now we want him to master the foreign language parallels or at least to establish certain fairly considerable basic abilities in each of these forms. A pupil of a certain age should be, other things being equal, comparable to his contemporary coeval abroad for whom the former's foreign language is his mother tongue. We will see soon how much we have to detract from this ideal owing to other considerations. But let us consider first whether this is always desirable. Firstly, there may be special courses meant to enable the learner to communicate with people of a different stratum from his own. Evidently, it can be, for other reasons, only an educationally lower stratum (cf. the specialist abroad mentioned a while ago). For he is inhibited from adequately communicating with higher strata for other reasons. Secondly, there are courses, more general though, for which the most likely use of the foreign language by the learner has to be considered. There are, for instance, the needs of one staying abroad for a relatively short period and hence not taking social roots in the country or again the needs of one entering into contact with foreigners on his own or some neutral ground. Either situation is of no little weight for our considerations. Our learner will meet his

equals but will also have to cope with a number of everyday situations necessitating the use of some relatively lower types of the spoken foreign language. This should call for the building up of a course of the language actively used by the learner's equals and especially coevals abroad and passively accessible to the learner with a certain involvement of both passive and active knowledge of the slightly lower colloquial style. To give some examples in English: constructions such as there is people who ..., he don't know about it, words like fag or grub should not be barred from him granted that there are no other factors restricting the teaching aims.

The Style to be Chosen

There are also various functional styles of a language, recently rediscovered as "registers". Within the same social form of language, spoken or written, we can find considerable differences according to the function, or if you like, the mission the utterance has to fulfill in communication. Peter Strevens particularly accentuates differences according to social and educational level and personal relationship: "a person will speak or write differently, on a given subject, to different people; to, for example, his wife and his boss's wife, to his window-cleaner and his Member of Parliament, to his son and his bank manager." When picking out scientific and technological registers and also the "complex register of literature", Strevens also considers them as varieties on the level

of human contact. Inside the single registers he recognises the polarity of style of discourse between frozen and intimate with vulgarity somehow added and running across and making itself felt the more strongly the further down the scale we get. The Prague linguistic tradition would not have felt the need for such a three-dimensional distinction made (register - style - admixture of vulgarity). In our opinion, speaking formally we speak in the same way to our wife and our boss's wife and we speak in the same way, though differently from the previous one, when speaking to either - intimately. Relationship on the social and educational level or personal relationships merely get reflected in the choice of style which rather than on a scale of human and social distance between the encoder and the decoder (speaker and hearer, etc.) should be based on the relation of the respective communication to the two participants and to the situation they both are in. The use or non-use or the quantity of use of technical terms in professional style the fact that historical writing prevalently uses past tense forms or a treatise on colours in art makes extensive use of adjectives is not a feature of another style or stylistic dimension, but of the communicated content (the same happens in other kinds of reports in other professions). What is common is the overt intent of passing on facts rather than arousing emotions or creating attitudes. Different from the professional style is artistic style

and colloquial non-professional style, also called private: On the other hand, style is not only a reflex of the intent of a communication, it also reflects the intended absorption of the communication by the communicative situation (for instance popular scientific literature as compared with highly professional scientific literature).

And now, what style should be the basis of foreign language teaching? Again it would be no use teaching future surgeons, who will all have to decode professional literature, any other than the professional style, unless of course we consider it worth while to cater also for those - varying in numbers in various communities - who will also attend international conferences, practise in institutions abroad, etc., and arrange for them a course enabling them to discuss their professional problems and see to everyday matters connected with their stay abroad. Within the limits of general education we will likely have to consider whether on leaving school our pupil will enter a profession where professional style will be met with as prevalent or whether there will be greater use of colloquial style or whether he should be enabled to follow literary production in the particular language. Education preparatory to university will no doubt favour professional style without neglecting altogether the style of simple fiction (which can be further developed in a person of university-level education). In many educational systems it seems to be

the easiest, in education preparatory to university to give up the everyday colloquial, private style. International contacts between high specialists do not particularly handicapped by use of formal style in everyday life or by limitations of idiom. Colloquial style should however not be given up if there is enough scope for it after the professional style has had all possible attention devoted to it and after access to refined literature in the particular language has been adequately secured. On the other hand, the stage of compulsory schooling and hence education preparatory to early entrance upon a non-professional career will surely require more emphasis on everyday colloquial style with such additions perhaps as the style of a daily paper's non-reflective columns.

Use of the Language in the Learner's Society

Another consideration in formulating the aims should be the actual uses of the foreign language (in general, or of a particular form of it or of its particular style) in the learner's society. We have deliberately excluded from our considerations that use which we regard as a kind of modern parallel to teaching Latin in long-past European societies (as language of higher education, science and perhaps higher administration or even as medium of school instruction in general). Approaching the problem of aims in teaching a foreign language from the angle of actual uses we are very near the question of form and style to be selected. For the choice of form and style depends on both the intellectual and the social aspects of the teaching situation. Thus, a society whose language is itself a recognised language of international science and technical communication or one into which - thanks to other circumstances - foreign publications in these fields are readily translated and made available to those concerned, the choice will not be so unambiguously for professional style even in education preparatory to university. The style of polite literature will perhaps then be preferred. Considerations of tourist contacts should likewise decide the position of colloquial style in everyday use. No doubt, special schooling will pay attention to the society's needs in special fields. Thus it will be possible to prepare linguistically hotel receptionists,

waiters in international hotels, hotel personnel, petrol filling station attendants, conducted tour guides, etc. This will, for instance, make the style of polite literature altogether unnecessary and limit the written form of the respective language to the style of printed forms to be filled in and of trivial correspondence. Commercial vocational schools have a long tradition in teaching the style of business letters and the language of international business in general. Industrial vocational schools should concentrate on the language of prospectuses and printed instructions with a small addition of colloquial style of a guide's parlance and that of a small-scale host. In general education, however, the general features of the graduate from a certain school level as required by the society will come to the fore. It is also probable that here the educative values of the language teaching process itself will become more important than the category of final achievement.

The Educational Value of FLT

The selection will further depend on educational requirements, though, as I have stated earlier, these should not play the only or the foremost role in the selection of aims actually providing a basis for the teaching methodology. Let us suppose that the educational requirement is above all to promote international contacts and international exchange of ideas on all levels. This can be done by preparing the pupil

in any one of the mentioned styles. Only the content of the teaching may become purposefully adapted. Showing both differences and similarities in language, thought and life, i.e. material and intellectual culture, leads to understanding other nationals. A content of teaching, however, which smooths down the differences or again which overstuffs the training with the difference, and avoids any sort of parallelism, does a disservice to international contacts. Language learning then becomes a mere encoding and decoding, a kind of solution of a crossword puzzle, for the pupil. Still, there are no doubt circumstances in a nation which directly connect the educational requirements with the selection and precise formulation of teaching aims.

I would like to distinguish here educational requirements addressed by an individual learner qua learner, i.e. as a part of teaching process, outward, to his community, and educational requirements addressed by the community to the learner directly or by establishing certain elements of pressure in the individual learner as subject of instruction. After deciding upon the type of language (form, or medium, and style) to be preferably taught and the use of the language in certain types of its occurrence in the learner's society, we may consider the outward-directed educational requirements, hoping thus to arrive at a set of partial aims of the teaching of a language,

which as we will see later, are still only theoretical, subject to correction on further consideration.

The Learner: (a) In Specialized Education

The aims should accordingly be brought into harmony with the individual learner's requirements. This is easiest to do with a learner who knows what he expects from learning that language. There may be some who simply find it a hobby like any other pastime, and others again who see in it an advantage in their social roles as earners and starters of families or may be a road to "seeing the world". For the language fan, the aim may be its more playful, emotional "talk-as-talk-can" variety, or it may be more of the rational, encoding type. For the first, sometimes called a linguist in English, the aim might be defined so as to respect the intuitive type, always starting from the outline of language in actual use and embedded in lifelike situations. Given a real or sham situation in which language is employed, it should be the aim for him to use the language spontaneously with a maximum of automatisms and in forms and structures best suited to the situation. This linguist type of a language fan is sometimes very inexact where precise formulation is necessary and can only guess at the choice of linguistic means suitable to a stylistic level. He is very good at practical conversation, especially in everyday situations, he tends to be a superficial reader, or at best a reader for the mere pleasure of reading without

appreciating details of creative art too deeply. He can make an excellent interpreter on the spot or an affable guide and host. - For his language fan colleague, the grammatical and lexicological and particularly the contrastive items should play a considerable role and the partial aims will have more to do with analysis than synthesis. The language fan of the said type is sometimes rather clumsy about synthesis and topical practical conversation, he may be a fine reader and he frequently can appreciate details in literature overlooked by his colleague. He can make an excellent translator, even of belles lettres, if he only develops broader views of contextual values. As it is just these fans from whom in many countries the majority of language teachers are recruited. It is worth remarking here that neither type, if met with in too unalloyed a form, will make a desirable kind of teacher. Rather the second should continue the work started by the first, and hence, while the former is more suitable in primary education and in teaching certain types of beginners (usually below full mental maturity), the latter does excellent work with adults and on levels exclusively preparing for higher education. A happy combination of both types of teachers is a prerequisite of good functioning of institutions established for the training of translators and interpreters.

Of course, there are other learners who know what they expect from learning the language, who, however, hardly consider it a hobby and sometimes even plod along

very hard over the task, self-imposed as it sometimes may be. With these, the aims should be stated most clearly, they should not be too numerous and the learners themselves should be well-aware of them. Seeing the manifold uses of a foreign language, this type of learner sometimes asks for more than he can cope with, running the risk of overreaching himself, and he also tends to shoot off at different points at once. If he accepts certain limitations in the selection of aims, this type of learner can work well, because of his purposeful approach. In this way, for instance, you can teach a medical specialist to understand articles in the journals of his narrow speciality without pursuing other aims than the reading knowledge of professional literature.

(b) In General Education

In selecting and formulating the aims we are faced with the greatest difficulties when considering the individual learner's requirements if we are concerned with a non-individual general education. On a higher level, outside compulsory training, there are already quite a number of individual features met with group-wise, which need not be overlooked when the aims are sought. An adolescent learner, who feels that without mastering a foreign language, to some degree, he cannot assert himself either in the cultural or in the social and economic context of his society, puts forward certain requirements which it would be unwise not

to consider. In a competitive society, this is perhaps yet more in evidence. With others, the influence of the family surroundings and of general trends among the youth make themselves felt and get reflected in such requirements. Here it is especially important to find the correct proportion between the speaking and the reading abilities. The pleasure felt from the awareness of a growing cultural maturity and professional readiness should not get wasted by too low conversational aims. It ought to be serious discussion of problems which should be aimed at this higher level. However, we must point out here and now that this results in a tragic collision wherever a living foreign of a society of established culture is to be started as late as senior secondary school. The necessarily playful beginnings clash with the desire to discuss things and/or read things discussed. At best, the discussion stage is forestalled and the result is a very inadequate performance and a very bad investment in any further development of the knowledge of the language.

The Organizer and the Learner

Next to the learner's, the requirements of whoever is organizing the teaching have to be considered in formulating aims. The organizer, be it the narrow local or the state community, may have in view certain professional advantages for the pupil or the pupil's general ability to enter into contact with other nationals. In the first case, the aims are formulated on the basis of what

notion the organizer has of a well-prepared starter of a career. It is understandably most advantageous for there to be harmony between the learner's and the organizer's requirements. Then, as is evident, the learner's requirements may strike the balance as to the aims. Therefore, it is rather those situations that have to be considered in which the learner is intent on different aims or is indifferent. The latter attitude, that of indifference, is less difficult to overcome. The pupil merely finds language teaching as just another burden imposed on him, he finds no pleasure either in the learning of the language itself or in the single steps arrived at as partial achievements. At best, he endeavours to collect tokens of acknowledgement of his performance by the teacher, be they words of praise or good marks. It is well-known that quite a number of pupils like these can be won over for language learning so that it need not for ever remain merely another school subject. Here the teacher's skill does not so much lie in finding the right aim as rather in finding the way to introduce this amorphous mass of pupils into the concert of productive or receptive linguistic performance organized in class and, if successful, having effects in after-school time and out-of-school situations. It need not perhaps be more than talk like "I butted into a foreigner in our street yesterday and managed to show him the way as he wanted me to" or "do you know, Jack, I quite succeeded in deciphering a thrilling short

story in the German paper daddy subscribes to?" With this type, what we have to bring about is acceptance of aims already accepted by other pupils because it is practically required. The worse type is the one that has widely different requirements. Let us imagine pupils so practical-minded that they refuse the teaching aims of the rather cultural or professional types, who would like to do a lot of conversation on everyday topics but are in a type of school where the chief object is cultural refinement and preparation for prevalently passive, receptive handling of professional communications. Or vice versa, let us imagine a pupil interested in cultural matters or in tackling professional texts who is forced into what he considers as the straitjacket of everyday conversation. No doubt, such misfits have to be dealt with individually if for any reason they cannot simply change school.

The Organizer and the Motivation

The second group of factors further shaping what we have called the ideal aims are pressures driving learner and teacher to turn possibilities into realities or what it has become the fashion to call motivations. A pupil is motivated to respond to the task of fulfilling a certain aim or set aims better than another aim or other aims. There are also characteristic differences between teachers according to motivation. I have intentionally left out the question of talent or apti-

tude to learn or to teach a foreign language, which can be tested but which is usually less accessible to logical connection with any prime mover and hence is hardly a motivation in the true sense of the word at all. There may also be negative or anti-motivations. In this country it is well remembered how, in the twenties, German - though based on a long teaching tradition and with quite a number of bilingual supports in the teaching situation - was not acquired in school instruction anything like so perfectly as it could have been. Simply because of the negative motivation in so many individual pupils who through a direct or an indirect influence of many factors had nearly become allergic to that language. (There was a similar, though shorter, period of the same kind after the second war.) Positive motivations, however, indubitably play an important role in shaping the ideal set of aims. If we know that at a certain age and in certain surroundings, urban rather than rustic, the pupils spontaneously or at slightest urge enter into pen-friendships, this should lead to we should introduce or strengthen the aim of teaching them how to write a simple letter and how to word a simple description of the facts of their own life. Other individual motivations should similarly introduce the ability to sing songs (and not folk songs only) or the ability to read simple news about persons and events of world-wide interest to young people. With pupils coming from

intellectual families known to have already acquired the habit of reading foreign papers, listening to foreign broadcasts, attending foreign-language clubs, or even to reading foreign fiction, etc., it is no doubt advisable to reckon with similar trends as individual features of the pupil. This will strengthen, in the complex of aims, the practical application of linguistic knowledge. Discussion will be preferred to mere conversation on everyday topics or intelligent reading will come to the fore, while, for instance, writing in the respective language will recede.

The motivating influence of the surrounding society, which is mostly itself the organizer of the teaching, is well-known and a clear final shaper of the ideal set of aims. Let us imagine we have selected for our pupil as the final achievement active and receptive knowledge of the spoken language in everyday use, the ability to understand and produce simple written communications and to understand and fill in simple forms as is done in the everyday life of a non-intellectual worker. It is now expected that our pupils will for a time live abroad as junior staff in embassies or consulates or at commercial agencies or as non-native staff of foreign-based branches etc. or that they will be offered as staff to foreign institutions and employers in their own country. The aim will then be shaped in accordance with the society's idea of the educational^a goal to be pursued. It will be advantageous for them to speak of matters of interest

to them and to their employers and to communicate with both their equals and their superiors. Now the motivation of the society surrounding them while learning the language will be the wish to have reliable people who are at the same time representative on their own scale. This is no small way reflected in their verbal behaviour. The community as organizer of their linguistic instruction will, through this motivation, give the ideal set of aims a practically behavioural modification: the active use of the language should be accompanied by the proper gesture and inobtrusive behaviour socially acceptable in the country for which the use of the language is expected.

Realistic Aims

Up to this point we have been trying to collect and stratify all the factors in the formulation of a complex of aims, being at the same time aware that in practice there are powerful restrictions and modifications of the aims thus arrived at. Sometimes there may be, counter all expectation, amplifications, i.e. forces giving greater scope to the practical realization of the aims in the course of instruction. In addition to this, there are restrictions of a secondary kind, not arising directly from the conditions of the teaching and learning itself but from the educational context in which these conditions are set. We will mention them later, by way of conclusion.

The restrictions are well known to all practical teachers who give the aims profound enough thought. It is these restrictions they unwillingly give in to as barriers to full realization of what they feel they could make their pupils attain and what they feel the pupils themselves could well achieve. Some of them they simply have to cope with, understanding their inescapability.

Inadequacy of Age in Learner and Conversational Experience in Teacher

Certain restrictions lie in the learner or in the teacher and in their use of the equipment and in the organizational possibilities. If the compulsory education, for instance, is too short and certain aims in foreign language teaching have yet to be attained, the pupil's low age, his mental immaturity, his lack of experience in life may represent strong restrictive factors. Some of the desirable aims have to be cancelled or at least limited to what is required by the teaching methodology. For instance, writing and reading in the foreign language may have to be kept down, under certain circumstances, to only as much as is needed for purposes of checking the pupil's work or for the use of textbooks and hence repetition after school or for catching up with the others after absence from school or under other individual handicaps. If the primary school teacher has no chance or little to acquire first-hand knowledge of the use of language in everyday situations, the everyday

conversational aim should similarly be cancelled, or, rather, limited to what we might call a foreigner's conversation - phonetically adequate, but using linguistically acceptable rather than situationally adequate utterances. The pupil will then be taught to say Excuse me, I do not understand you and will not say - perhaps not even understand - Beg your pardon? This is best defined as teaching only those types of utterances which are common to the spoken and the written forms of the language and especially such as have some frequency even in literary and professional styles. One can imagine that conversation with pupils thus trained is acceptable though sometimes rather flat and a foreigner talking to them has to be careful to shift the register towards a more formal style ("speaking like a book").

Inadequacy of Equipment and Time

There is no need to say that absence of textbooks is a nearly unsurmountable obstacle even where there is no writing and reading knowledge as an aim. It requires much time for repetition and calls for a very young playful learner. If he is too old, it is only in rare cases that ability to take part in everyday conversation can be set as an aim without any limitation and as an isolated aim. An adult learner's inextricable connection with reading and writing makes it necessary to place the conversational aim by the side of aims which may clash with insufficiency of teaching time.

Witness the so-called intensive courses for specialists whom their employer has at a short notice decided to send abroad. As with the very young pupil, some compromise has to be sought ensuring comprehension at a lower level and active performance which is at least acceptable to the native speaker.

Sometimes it is the question of how much worth-while effort can be actually devoted by either learner or teacher to achieve the ideal set of aims. The number of lessons devoted to teaching, their length in time, the regularity of their recurrence, their location and distribution in the time-table, all this may call for modification of the aim.

Inadequacy of Prerequisites in Class

Some restrictions are imposed by social and economic factors: the number of teachers, the average teaching load of language teachers, their equipment with proper aids and their ability to use them. We have quite recently witnessed how ideal aims had to be cut down in practice as soon as it had become clear that the teacher either did not have the requisite aids at his disposal or, if he had, was not trained to use them with methodological purpose or at least was not convinced of their value. In spite of ministerial furtherance of certain aims they have turned out to be only ideal aims under such conditions which got modified by social factors in practice. The community, for reasons economic, political or social, may not be willing or able to equip

language teaching with enough personnel or give them the necessary training, to secure the necessary material and methodological prerequisites^e. Sometimes this may be merely due to absolute or relative conservatism of the inherited system or the preference given in the general curriculum to other subjects. Enough time was not found for language lessons or sufficient means to make the teaching effective by splitting classes into small groups or to issue textbooks or taped courses sufficiently differentiated to serve the varied sets of aims. All this is bound to lead to restrictions in the ideal set of aims. The worst service to language teaching, it should be stressed, is the retention of all the single ideal aims, trying to pursue all of them and then actually making it impossible to achieve any single one of them or at least to get near the desired goal.

Improving on the Restrictions

There is of course a certain measure of compensation possible. It is well-known that investment of means and time in the preparation of a language teacher is a paying investment and so is any facilitation of his travel abroad, especially to the country where the language he teaches is spoken. Such an investment makes it possible regularly, not just once, to get smoothly over a temporary shortage of adequate books or other aids, of teachers themselves, of teaching hours, etc.

On the contrary, it is possible to adduce certain

amplifications capable of the reinstatement of certain aims. Thus it is well-known that in a bilingual society the role of the teacher especially on the spoken level and in everyday conversation is so much facilitated that even with some of the restrictive forces present no actual restrictions need take place. The teaching situation, as far as these aims are concerned, is simply more fortunate. Even with young children certain aims may be achieved thanks to the imitativeness of the age, though in other respects this age may introduce unsurmountable difficulties and call for restrictions.

It should be borne in mind that both restriction and amplification have certain ceiling limits as well as certain lower limits. If, for instance, the number of teaching lessons or the regularity of their recurrence should become too low it might become questionable whether foreign language teaching as a school subject is still worth while at all or whether restrictions to an aim should not rather make for the cancellation of this aim. The counteracting value of certain amplifications may also appear to be too low to make itself felt.

Reconsidering the Partial Aims in their Complexity

In this way we arrive, in finding out and formulating the aims, at an aggregate of partial aims, which may be rightly considered realistic individually, but which have to be, in addition to all this, reconsidered

in their complexity. It may be realistic to try to achieve aim A and aim B, but it is doubtful whether both A and B and C can reasonably be achieved. Unfortunately, with the pressure on the curriculum of other subjects and with the restrictions consequently imposed on the extent and the significance of foreign language lessons, it often happens that those responsible for the teaching do not have the heart to make radical changes in the conception and the complex of aims. If we push the start of language teaching forward we have to reconsider the aims and so we must if we push the start too low down. The introduction, with the support of the community, of new aids may again call for a shift of central weight on to different partial aims. This has happened quite recently with the technical aids and has led to diminished proficiency in such skills as writing and reading in the foreign language. Rightly enough, voices have made themselves heard asking whether we do not thus, unintentionally, perhaps, suppress or undernourish just those skills which may under certain circumstances be more important for individual private continuation in learning a foreign language (or further foreign languages) after the years of compulsory school attendance than the ephemerally impressive near-automatic spoken reactions. Hence it ought to be clear that the realistic aims should be weighed as a complex and then reshaped or have the respective

weight laid on them redistributed. This is not the case within an educational system only. It holds also for self-teaching when, more often than not, the learner, in addition to being his own teacher, is also a planner and programmer of his own work. The more enlightened his approach in selecting the aims for himself and self-teaching aids is, the more easily should the choice lead him to the right decision as to what to do if the one aim is more to his own liking than another.

With a View to Other Subjects

Proceeding in the shaping of a realistic complex of aims in the school system, we have to recognise that the relation to other subjects in the curriculum also plays its part. It is, for example, clear that the aims may be formulated differently or with different stress laid upon each, if the foreign language taught is not the first but the second foreign language in the curriculum. It has also to be considered whether the first or the second foreign language is related to the pupil's mother tongue, and in case it is, then how favourably or unfavourably related it is for learning it. No need to say that the linguistic relationship of the first and the second foreign language has also to be taken into account. An important role is played by the character and the linguistic position of the pupil's mother tongue and its traditional treatment in class. It may be so much helpful to the foreign language teaching that it saves teaching time and hence also protects some of the aims from

cancellation or restriction. We are not of the opinion that the more a pupil knows about his mother tongue, its means, functions and structures, the more difficult it is to make him speak a foreign language. It is possible that the development of certain automatisms is slightly braked, but we consider it a mistake to think that when direct-method approach is used, no comparison with the mother tongue is present. Conversely, it is good if the pupil can wield a knowledge about the language upon which he bases his thinking and with which he connects his conceptual vision. Knowledge is always more fruitful than guessing. Now, education in the mother tongue which is conceived so as to lead away from mere guess work, makes it possible to retouch upon the final realistic complex of aims in teaching a foreign language.

With a View to what is Helpful in More than One Way

It should likewise not be forgotten that there are aims which have, so to say, only one interpretive value, while others have more than one. It is well-known that, for instance, speaking a language - being phonic in its nature - is separated from both writing and reading - which are visual. There are practically no normal people who can write a language without being able to read it, i.e. take in written or printed language with comprehension. Reading aloud is a slightly different matter and it is a bridge between reading

simple and speaking. This means that writing and reading can to a certain degree supply for each other. For each teaches the pupil the shape of the written form of a language. This may for example lead to the cancellation or partial suppression of reading, if writing is considered also important for testing certain preparedness for speaking, or for reading, if this in the general context appears to be more valuable or less indispensable than writing (e.g. there is little chance that the learner will in the end take up much correspondence). Evidently the latter might only be the case if speaking, too, recedes because giving up writing also means giving up certain valuable procedures for checking the elaboration of the ability to speak. In this respect, reading is only of this value to speech: that, in addition to speaking, it makes the pupil aware of the units and the structure (in a visual way, for a change), and in case he is reading aloud, of the phonetic structure, and prolongs a part of the teacher-pupil conversation into home study - namely through the hearing oneself speaking. - Similarly, there are different relations between lower levels of aims: the style of belles lettres is helpful to both the colloquial and the professional styles, to each in its way, while the distance between colloquial style and professional style (that is style of professional publications, above all) is greater. It is only in some types of the colloquial and the professional styles that there is this little in common: they have a relatively simple

structure of sentences. In a way, the literary style of works of art can be said to be multivalent as compared with the relative univalence of the colloquial and the professional styles. This circumstance may be advantageous in some teaching situations, but unnecessarily complicating in others. - If the aim for speaking is described as fluent or near-native, this need not be helpful to other aims, for then attention is centred on automatisms and idiomaticity, perhaps also ability to react in some way, though always fluent and idiomatic, to situations that may arise in everyday conversation. The aim may be that of speaking with a wealth of expressions and a great variety of constructions, perhaps at a leisurely speed and with some gropings as to the correctness, of choice between the several possible ways of saying the same thing, this helps in the formation of both writing and reading knowledge.

From what has been said it follows that the aims cannot be merely stated, rounded off to ideal shape reformulated under the pressure of restrictive and amplifying factors. They have got to be hierarchized. The partial aim least dispensable will get placed in front, those dispensable in the close of complete realistic set, so that decision can be made on the various levels of form and style of the language, type of knowledge, quality of knowledge, acceptability of performance, etc. In this hierarchy, the plastic total aggregate can be formulated. This is the structured complex of aims which should be

formulated for each individual educational unit.

With a View to the School System

Finally, it should be stated that since the single types and stages of school education are interlinked, it will sometimes be necessary to restrict the supposedly realistic aim and cut it according to the interlinking school system. In schools with nursery-school teaching preceding, the aims will be different from those without such a prelude. In schools conducting a foreign language course without a break up to graduation over a number of years, it will again be differently modified from what it is when split into separate junior and senior stages with changes of class structure, perhaps even importance in the curriculum, nature of the teacher's professional education, etc. In the second foreign language it may happen that the professional preparation for universities links up with a kind of schooling which has different aims and is conducted by differently trained teachers, so that the number and significance of the cracks at the suture gets multiplied.

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When officially publishing the teaching aims for the individual types of foreign language education, three aspects should be mentioned: the achievements expected on the part of the pupil (learner), the special type of effort to be made by the teacher and, thirdly, what are the expectations of the teacher's linguistic, practical and

pedagogical preparation and what ways are used to promote and to inspect his work. As long as little is known theoretically and on the basis of research about the aims of FLT in detail it is difficult to expect that the future language learner will get adequately trained for his task.

Only if one is aware of what the learner and the teacher and, indirectly, those preparing the teacher are expected to achieve under given conditions, can proper methods be sought, chosen and applied. It is therefore desirable that the nature of the conditions be studied for the benefit of whoever organizes language teaching before he and his experts decide upon the best structure of aims for every single type of education and for every characteristic language learning situation. Research in the problem of what relation, there is of tentatively prestated aims to the conditions of teaching is consequently highly desirable and in our opinion it deserves the support of institutions promoting international understanding.